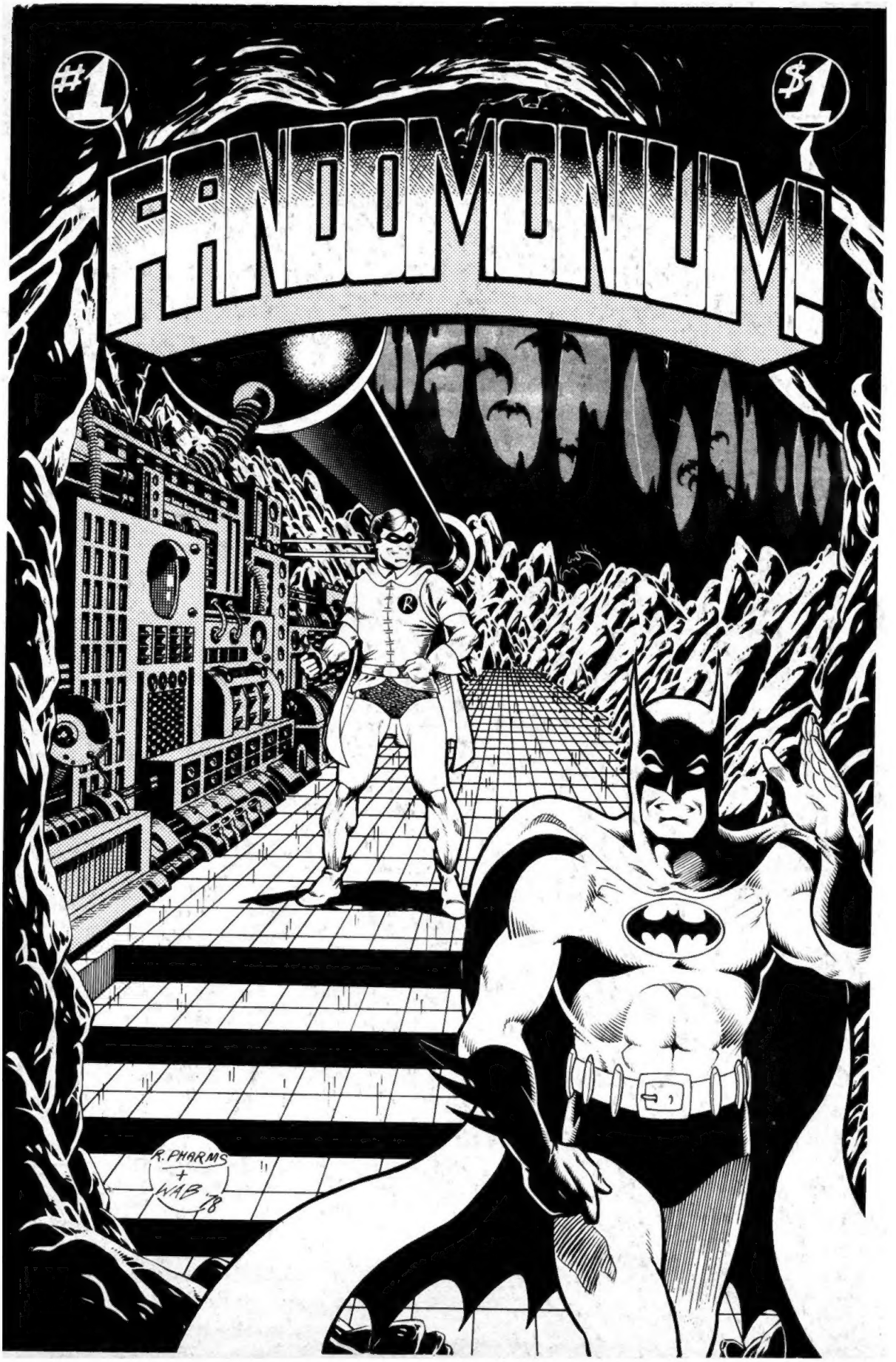
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FANDOMONIUM!
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WAB
'78

Beatty '78 — . ML .

FANDOM-ONIUM!

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Steve Bullock	Willie Peppers
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A.J. Hanley	Alan Dale Tromp

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WELCOME..!

... to the first issue of FANDOMONIUM! We all put in a lot of work on this, so let's move on!

I'd like to thank everyone who helped with this issue; Darwin Howe, Willie Blyberg,Willie Peppers,Steve (Dagwood Burger) Bullock,Alan Dale Tromp, and Earl Geier. I owe Earl an extra thanks for putting up with my late night calls asking him for more art. He always came through with high speed and stunning quality. Thanks Earl. Extra special thanks goes to my father,Stanley Stamets, who footed the bill and provided advice for this issue. Thanks Pop!

SIDE NOTE: This first issue of FANDOMONIUM! is dedicated to Alan Jim Hanley, one of the kindest and most generous people in fandom.(and one of the most talented). He's influenced me greatly with his Goodguy strip, and I'm still picking up on some of his hidden meanings and subtle social comment. I tried to get him do do a strip for this issue,but he was otherwise commited. Everyone write and order a copy of Comic Book #7,his address is in Fandom Update.

Next issue will bring many changes, both in content and format. #2 will have 8-10 more pages, better stock covers and paper, and be wrap-around, still using the large format. I plan to search out as much of the best fan talent available, so if you'd like to give writing or drawing a whirl, drop me a letter with some samples. Please enclose an SASE for a speedy reply. (ABSOLUTE DEADLINE FOR ALL CONTRIBUTIONS: Dec. 8,1978. Bill Mutschler take note!)

For that matter,everyone write me a letter and tell me what you thought about this issue. Fanzine editors; I'm interested in trading plugs and/or copies for this issue. Also, I plan to aplly for membership to the United Fanzine Organization, so everyone out there who gets a UFO zine write to the editor and tell them to vote me in. Your support will be appreciated!

That's all for now. Read on and enjoy!!!!!!

Russell A. Stamets

I Want to hear from you!
Write (or call) me at: (312) 339-9483
16430 Kimbark
South Holland, Ill.
60473

"WHERE NO MAN HAS GONE BEFORE!"
--AND THAT CONCLUDES TODAY'S LECTURE. CHECK YOUR NOTES AND ASSIGNMENTS AND WE'LL CONCLUDE THIS SECTION OF THE COURSE WITH A SUMMARY TOMORROW.
CLASS DISMISSED!
WRITTEN-CONCEIVED-PLOTTED BY
RUSSELL ALAN STAMETS
PENCILS-INKS-DIALOGUE
WILLIAM LOUIS PEPPERS

HEY MIKE, IS OUR DATE STILL ON FOR TONIGHT? MIKE-- DON'T YOU HEAR ME?
MIKE??
--SOMETHING THE PROFESSOR SAID-- MAYBE-- WHA--?
--OH-HI SHARON. HOW'S IT GOIN'?
--I SAID, IS OUR DATE STI--
UH--NO. CAN'T CUT IT TONIGHT, BABE. I GOT SOME HEAVY CALCULATIONS TO GET INTO.
MIKE LASSWELL, ALL YOU DO IS CALCULATE!
THE REST OF THE GANG SAYS YOU'RE WEIRD-- AND I'M INCLINED TO AGREE!
Y'KNOW SHARON-- SO AM I.
HMMPH!
LATER--AT HOME--
EQUALS THE POWER OF--AND-- ½6C12-(Xb) a=x/
UF6 Hg-80 U92 + Sr-38 + Co-27 =
STAR WARS
MOMENT OF INERTIA--Si-14 + H3O + X/b FACTOR =
DAMN IT!!
SNAP!
IT DOESN'T WORK!! I'VE TRIED EVERYTHING!! I'VE PIECED TOGETHER EVERY THEORY ON MATTER, AND THEY STILL DON'T JIVE WITH EACH OTHER!
WHY?
THERE'S AN EMPTY VOID THAT NO ONE'S TOUCHED! I'VE GOTTA TELL SOMEONE! I KNOW! I'LL TALK TO PROF. MICHAELS AFTER CLASS TOMORROW!

IMMEDIATELY AFTER CLASS THE NEXT DAY---
PROFESSOR MICHAELS-- HOLD IT A SECOND --I'VE GOTTA TALK TO YOU!
CERTAINLY, MIKE. COME INTO MY OFFICE--WE'LL TALK THERE.
PROFESSOR--I'VE BEEN REALLY ENGROSSED WITH YOUR CLASS CONCERNING MOLECULAR DIVISION AND MANIPULATION, AND PARTICULARLY MATTER PARALLELS AND TRANSFIGURATION --BUT IN MY PERSONAL STUDIES, I'VE DISCOVERED NUMEROUS INCONSISTENCIES. DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS?
UH--MIKE? I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU'RE THINKING.
I'LL WAGER YOU'VE ANALIZED ALL THE THEORIES PERTAINING TO MATTER, AND DISCOVERED A LOT OF UNBREAKABLE EQUASIONS--RIGHT?
--I--UH--
WHEN I WAS A STUDENT, IN MY SPARE TIME, I WORKED ALONG THOSE SAME LINES AND CAME TO THE SAME CONCLUSION. THERE'S A LOT OF QUESTIONS NEEDING ANSWERS.
REGRETFULLY, AFTER NUMEROUS FAILURES IN FINDING THOSE ANSWERS, I LOST INTEREST AND WENT NO FURTHER. MIKE --WOULD YOU LIKE TO WORK WITH ME?
WE COULD MATCH OUR COMPUTATIONS AND TAKE UP WHERE I LEFT OFF-- THAT IS, IF YOU'RE GAME.
IF I'M GAME?? I SURE AM! I'M SURE THAT TOGETHER WE CAN BEAT THIS THING! WHATEVER IT IS. --WHEN CAN WE START?
WE CAN START TONIGHT IF YOU LIKE. I HAVE SOME EQUIPMENT IN THE LAB, ALONG WITH A DEVICE I WAS WORKING ON. YOU CAN HELP ME COMPLETE IT!
THANK YOU!!
YOU KNOW, MIKE--YOU MAY BE RIGHT. TOGETHER, WE COULD GET RESULTS.
I'M SURE WE WILL. YOU CAN COUNT ON ME TO DO MY BEST. SEE YA' TONIGHT, PROFESSOR.
8 O'CLOCK SHARP. I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT!

LATER THAT NIGHT--
WELL, THAT JUST ABOUT DOES IT!--HOW ARE YOU DOING, MIKE?
--JUST ONE MORE ADJUSTMENT AND --FINISHED!
WELL, MIKE--THERE IT IS! IF IT WORKS, WE'LL SOON KNOW WHAT LIES BETWEEN PARALLEL DIMENSIONS, AND HOW MATTER IS AFFECTED!
WE'LL KNOW WHAT OCCUPIES THE GAP BETWEEN MATTER AND ANTI-MATTER!
THEN LET'S STOP GAWKIN' AN' REV IT UP!
LIKE WE AGREED, I'LL TRY IT OUT FIRST!
I WOULD SAY SOMETHING LIKE "ONE SMALL STEP FOR MAN", AND ALL THAT JAZZ--BUT I THINK I'LL WAIT UNTIL I SEE WHAT I'M STEPPING INTO.
YOU'D BETTER GET READY, MIKE-- I'M ACTIVATING THE RIFT OSCILLATOR!
I'M CUTTING IN THE NORM FLUX SEPARATORS--
BE CAREFUL, MIKE.
I WOULDN'T HAVE IT ANY OTHER WAY, PROFESSOR.
NOW, LET'S SEE WHAT I CAN SEE.
REMEMBER--NOT TOO LONG.
SURE. I'LL GRAB YOU A COKE ON MY WAY BACK.

--AND, AS MIKE LASSWELL TRAVERSES THE DIMENSIONAL BOUNDERIES, HE DISCOVERS ---
HOLY MOSES!!
THIS PLACE LOOKS LIKE IT'S STRAIGHT OUT OF A DR. STRANGE COMICBOOK!
I NEVER DREAMED THAT IT WOULD BE LIKE THIS!
DISNEYLAND'S GOT NOTHING ON THIS PLACE!
I'M HERE, BUT IT'S STILL HARD TO BELIEVE--AND I'M LIGHTER THAN AIR YET!
HEY--WAIT A SEC!? I'M BREATHING!!
IT JUST OCCURED TO ME THAT THIS PLACE COULD'VE BEEN A VACUUM!
--SEVERAL MINUTES PASS--
I'D BEST DO LIKE THE PROF. SAID! DON'T WANNA STAY HERE TOO LONG!
NO TELLING WHAT AFTER-EFFECTS MAY COME OF THIS!
HEY, MY WATCH -- IT'S RUNNING BACKWARDS --FORWARD--BACK-- THIS IS CRAZY!

MIKE'S BEEN IN THERE FOR OVER SIX MINUTES -- THAT COULD BE DANGEROUS!
I HOPE HE'S ON HIS WAY BACK -- WE CAN'T AFFORD TO HAVE ANY-THING GO WRONG NOW!
HOWDY FOLKS! -- I'M MR. SPOCK OF --
MIKE!!
MIKE -- YOU'RE BACK --! YOU WERE IN THERE FOR QUITE A WHILE ---
I WAS WORRIED THAT SOMETHING MAY HAVE HAPPENED TO YOU!
NO SWEAT, PROF. -- I RE-MEMBERED YOU TELLING ME NOT TO STAY TOO LONG -- SO, I HEADED RIGHT BACK!
WELL, MIKE -- WHAT DID YOU FIND? -- HOW DID IT LOOK?
YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE IT! I DON'T EVEN BELIEVE IT YET!

DANGER: CRITICAL OVERLOAD

--TO BE CONTINUED--

Fandom Update

by Russ Al Stamets

Welcome to the first installment of my fanzine review column.Next issue I want to spread the scope of things reviewed (e.g. posters,semi-pro pubs,ect..) so let me know what you'd like to see.Any zine editors who would like your zine reviewed,and any comments and/or suggestions for this column write me.

AFTA #2-208 pages of brilliant fan material.A magazine that will entertain and inform you.A magazine with a cause,and more than worthy of your support.Only $1.50 from:Bill Marcinko, RPO 5009,Rutgers Univ.,New Brunswick, N.J. 08903

FANDOM's DIGEST #1-I told Ward that I would agree to an exchange of plugs. But,I felt that I should give him an honest opinion on FD.It's got potential, maily due to Ward's natural talent,but this needs much more planning.It'd be better if he also had a proofer. Buy this for interesting reading from: Ward Batty,944 Austin Ave. NE,Atlanta, Geo. 30307 (almost forgot,it's $1.25)

EAGLESTAR #2-Larry is a great artist and knows printing tech.The repro and paper are of the highest quality,and the art and story more than match.A good buy for only $2(color covers and slick paper)from:Larry Johnson,So. Beloit,Ill. 61080. A MUST!

COMIC BOOK COLLECTOR #10-32 pages of fan fun from:John Harris,54 Berkshire Dr, Crystal Lake,Ill. 60014,50¢.A personal favorite of mine.Crude,but a lot of fun. Support this thing.

PAIGE PROFILE #4- 75¢ for 48 Paiges(bad joke)from Steve Streeter,1104 W. Lincoln,Mt. Prospect,Ill. 60056.This is the best thing Steve & Co. have yet done. Has strips by Mark Haike,Willie Peppers, Steve,and many others.Check out Steve's ad in this issue and trie one(or four!) of his pubs. I promise you'll not be dis-appointed!

WOWEEKAZOWIE! #3-It took Iro long enough, but the result was worth it.Solid graphic stories,written by capable athours. Features Pete Iro,Willie Blyberg,Gene Day,and Tim Corrigan(a complete Elastic Worm story).75¢ from:Pete Iro,455 Potomac Ave,Buffalo,N.Y. 14123

NO SEX #8- 50¢ for 60 digest pages from: Dan Watson,1520 Hedge Rd,Champaign,Ill. 61820.Another in the fine line of No Sex pubs.Diversity is thier byline,and fine fan talent is featured.Strips,faan fiction and other assorted goodies fill this issue Reccomended.

COMIC BOOK #7- $1.50 from:A.J.Hanley, Cinder Lane Rt.2,Camp Douglas,Wis.54618 A complete Hanley strip from TBG,the collected GREENHORN.Slick stockand quality repro,plus Hanley's Good Garbage make for terrific reading. RECCOMENDED HIGHLY!!!

THE COMPLETE MONTY PYTHON Vol. 1-$1.65 for 52 pages of craziness from:Kim Johson,1411 Cherokee Lane,Ottawa,Ill.61350. A very informative and well done assemly of Python data.Has a great cover,a quiz on Pythonania,and an interview with Michael Palin. Reccomended.

ECTASY OBLIVION #3- $1.25 for 68 pages of excellent work from:Dan Watson,1520 Hedge Rd.,Champaign,Ill.61820.A nice, large size(8½ x 11)helps to the effectiveness of this ish.Features a graphic story by Earl Geier called "Riders of The Plain".The story is 32 pages long and is just brilliant!Buy it if only to see the story.

COSMOSTAR #1- $1 for 54 pages of art and story from:Nickolai Alenikov(I love that name),6619 Orchard Av.,Bell,Calif. 90201.Great strips and Nick's stunning art are backed up by Steve Streeter, Dwayne Stickney,and Darrel Goza. GREAT MATERIAL!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

DAWN COMIX #1- 40¢ for 26 pages of great art from Nick Alenikov(see Cosmostar for address).Continues Nick's "Avenger" story with an even better adventure. "Captain Fallus" by Steve Bullock, and other features fill out the ish.

MOONSHADOW #2- $1 for 34 6 x 10 pages from:Tom Miller,2061 Joy Rd,Pontiac, Mich. 48057.Fair to good strips with work by Tom,Tim Corrigan,John Beatty, and Jim Stone. Check it out.

HERO SANDWICH #2- 40¢,16 pages from: Scott Topping,R3 Twin Lakes,Dogwiac, Mich. 49047. Features a good strip by Gene Day.Back up features include short stories,views on AFTA,and a profile on Steve Streeter.

CHICAGO"S GRAPHIC REVIEW #1- 75¢ for 28 pages from: Thom Morrisey,4637 W. 99 Pl, Oak Lawn,Ill. 60453.Despite its very neat apperance and color covers,these cannot disguise the fact that this has only mediocre(at best) material.Hopefully they'll learn how to write something enjoyable,instead of being high and mighty critics. Buy only on faith.

UNPUBLISHED #3- 55¢,24 pages from: Brad Young,1500 W. Harbour Dr,Apt. 1H,Wheeling ,Ill. 60090.A really terrific issue,with a cover and strip by Russ Maheras.Other strips by Sam DeLaRosa,Bill Garnet,and John Cosgriff. A great buy for the money, and I higly reccomend it.

ALL-AMERICAN JACK BATTLES
THE UGLY WUGLY!
IHO IHO IHO WUTACHOLLY OLSOLEAMI!
BACK IN YOUR CAGE TINY..
-HANLEY

A FINAL POGROM

written by
Alan Dale Tromp

illos by
Earl Geier

1. The Entropy Tangle

Frog eyes regarded me from a puddle. "I am hungry, Phillipe Charbonneau," they said.

A fat ophidian barker was giving me a big spiel about the virtues of his vine fruit. I nodded my head and continued down the street of polished marble.

Cobwebs wispered. "Is it guilt that gnaws at you now? We do what must for the good of mankind. We steal bread from hoarders and distribute it among the undernourished."

I smiled at the scaly courtesan who smiled back.

Gnats buzzed around my ears. "Have I not shared my feasts with you? Did I not provide this world for you to experience?"

Philosophers hawked esoteric wisdom and batrachian idols for a meagre donation.

Lean but muscular dogs suddenly jumped out of rubbish piles, and rats chittered menacingly. "Charbonneau, I have tried to be charitable. Perhaps you require more extreme methods of persuasion".

I ran from Thing's sattelites. I sought to lose myself in the bazaars and plazas, amid towers of geode crystal and colored glass, and in quiet groves of ginko and mimosa. Here, I assumed, niether Thing nor the dark wraiths of my conscience could trespass.

The sky growled, and my naive assumptions were shattered. Clouds belched raindrops of fire. Napalm.

Most of the reptile folk died in the open, the delicate fabrics they wore merely fodder for the inferno. Some sought refuge in the shinning palaces, but these too perished as the crystal and glass melted and fused into non-symmetrical blobs. The quiet groves were soon ash.

As my eidolon burned away, I heard Thing's laughter in the thunder.

When I opened my eyes, I saw him. As usual, he was perched on my desk, looking very much like a black toad defecating. His teeth were metal strikers, and his eyes were rows of keys. Thing usually looked this way in the waking world.

I crawled out of bed and went to the window. The smog had extinguished the stars. Across the street, a brick-and-steel apartment building, designed for quantity rather than quality, stretched twenty stories up. It was a twin to the one I lived in.

An empty stomach rumbled behind me. I had to get away...from it...from this land of thickening shadow.

A wink, and the skyscrapers were replaced with gleaming starships. The untarnished promise of the future. Man shall dance the song of Seyferts, and ask three new questions for every old one answered. Only a barbarian could refuse the challenge of the stars.

They appeared on cue. They spoke of "more worthy charities" and screamed about "wasteful expenditures". A million fists knocked the s ips down; a million feet stomped the hulls flat.

I cried as they carted away the metal to make shell casings. Tommorow lay stillborn.

continued on next page

There were no other visions left in me. The multiverse was gone. I was back in my little room, slowly dying of claustrophobia.

Thing was gloating over his victory. "What was bestowed,I have taken back. You have traded a million scintilliant worlds for this land of sharp words and decaying minds. Why do you bear such loyalty to a planet of dragonslayers?"

"Are you any different?" I asked,acknowledging him for the first time today.

A soft laugh. "I didn't destroy your petty hallucinations, Phillipe Charbonneau. I merely let a little of this world in."

And with that, my inner conflicts came to an end. I cared no more for the human race. I hated the atrophied brains that crushed any beauty they could not eat or ravish. I hated the few surviving dreamers, for they were born with what I had to purloin. The only thing that mattered now was my need.

Yes,thing would have its nourishment... and I would have my beautiful worlds of fancy once more. I went to the telephone and dialed my best frien number. There was no pain in my voice as I asked him over.

2. The Vanishing Wonder

In a small villa, beneath binary suns of purple and orange hue, I sat typing my memoirs. The written word, I had decided,shaped minds more effectively than flame or metal.

At times, however, my thoughts strayed from revolution. A recurring nightmare had robbed me of peaceful slumber for the past five nights. There were endless vistas of darkness encroaching upon pools of light. I saw myself; I was no longer tanned and muscular, but pale and gaunt in a loose blue robe.

In a tiny cubicle, I conversed with a gay and boisterous creature named Ed. He wore bib overalls, and sported torrents of brown hair. He spoke of magical things: oscillating universes and the Hermetic sciences and the price of souls.

Once he might have meant something to me.. I recalled a warmth between us. However, now he was just a receptacle;a vessel for the elixir I was determined to have at any cost.

I showed Ed something on the desk. It looked like a typewriter;it looked like my typewriter,but was much more. "What a beauty!", he remarked,rolling in some paper. "Heavy black iron,and I'll bet the strikers sound like bright swords on mail."

My greatest friend touched the keys,and shuddered as his dreams were torn out.

He looked up at me, and I saw emptiness in his eyes. We spoke of cholesterol and capital punishment and the price of beef;then he left me forever. Ed was dead inside. But then, so was I.

I touched the "typewriter" and felt the stolen dreams flow into me. Macaws and fan-

...fan lights

3. Behold the Many

Too soon days beneath the double star were gone,and I returned to poison skies and lead-based paint.

I met a woman in the bookstore. I immediately liked her,for I sensed she had the strength to realize her goals. We spoke for long hours of what could be, and swore to make it what "would be". That night,back at my apartment,the warmth of her body calmed the gnawing chill within me.I slept in her arms,while images flickered through my slumbering brain. Images? Nay;they were more like tacial memories.

The smoke of pyres filled the air. An uncountable number of men formed a vast circle around me.Each seemed to be an independent organism,but thick strands of tissue joined every being to his comrades on either side,giving the impression of one immense creature.

"Who are you!" I demanded.

"Who am I!" they corrected. I could make out individual features now; some wore battle armor,while others were attired in fine silk. Many had great wounds.

"I AM THE EXTRAPOLATOR;I AM THE STYLUS BEARER.I SEEK THE AESTHETIC IN EACH MAN, AND IMAGINATION IS THE LIGHT WHICH GUIDES ME.THE LORDS OF CREATIVITY AND STAGNATION ARE LOCKED IN PERPETUAL CONFLICT,AND IT IS MY LOT TO QUEST ETERNALLY FOR EQUILIBRIUM."

"Why?" I asked. "Why do you commit yourself to endless turmoil?"

The answer came in a hushed tone,as if spoken in shame. "IT WAS NOT MY CHOICE. BUT I AM NOT WITHOUT PERSONAL MOTIVATION; I FIGHT FOR MY LIFE ALONG WITH THE LIVES OF ALL MEN. A SURFEIT OF STAGNATION LEADS TO DECADENCE,AND EXCESSIVF CREATIVITY LEADS TO DEPRESSION.ONLY IN BALANCE DOES HUMANITY FLOURISH.

THE WAY HAS NOT BEEN EASY.I SPOKE THE FABLES AROUND CAMPFIRES BEFORE WRITING WAS BORN.

"A NEW AGE BEGAN.I CHRONICHLED GILGAMESH.I WAS HOMER. I WAS VIRGIL.

"I TAUGHT PEACE,SO THAT MY DREAMS MIGHT BE RELISHED BY OTHERS.THEY FORGOT WHAT I SAID,AND PUT THE STINK OF DEFICATION ON MY NAME. I WAS GAUTAMA. I WAS CHRIST.

"THEN,THEY FORGOT MY OLDEST WORKS, AND I RETURNED TO CHRONICLING MY FANTASIES."

I Wanted them to stop.The conversation was leading to something I had chosen to forget.

"I WAS ROBERT ERVIN HOWARD,AND VICTIM OF A FATAL PARADOX. I CREATED HEROES THAT SPIT IN THE FACE OF DEATH,BUT FOUND IT NECESSARY TO DIE BY MY OWN HAND.

"I WAS MICHAEL MOORCOCK,AND WRITING WAS MY EXORCISM.I CLUTCHED THE PAINFUL JEWEL OF THE NEW WAVE TO MY BREAST,AND REMEMBERED TOO MUCH OF WHAT I WAS,AND WAS YET TO BE..."

"Stop!" I cried. "I,your damnation is your own.What has it to do with me?"

I turned to look for an exit,and saw glistening ropes of flesh from my body into those of my captors.I was merely an appendage of the Extrapolator.

Unbidden,words came into my mouth.

"I WAS PHILIPPE CHARBONNEAU,AND WAS BORN WITH A DEAD SOUL.THERE WAS A WOMAN,DARK AND SULTRY,WHO PROMISED SPLENDORS BEYOND COMPREHENSION.HER GIFTS WERE INDEED MAGNIFICIENT,BUT FAR TOO COSTLY.I SOUGHT TO CONVINCE MYSELF I COMMITED THESE BLASPHEMIES FOR THE EVENTUAL BENIFIT OF ALL,BUT IN MY HEART I NEW BETTER!

There were others after me.Masato,Sri

...Bjanapurada,W'fhe,56KW...

I awoke with a scream in my ears.It had not been mine.My lover stood hunched over Thing.She looked at me through glazed eyes."I heard a noise." She said.

Ineffable fury welled up within me. I had not wanted this for her.

She was knocked to the ground as I lunged at Thing.A slave intent on breaking his chains,I picked up my master and flung him at the window.Thing changed,rebounded off the glass,and sat giggling on the floor.

Now I fell on my knees before him,and wept for forgiveness.In the brief moment I had touched him,Thing had given me the sweetest dreams ever tasted.

Thing was no longer of doubtful gender;the cool softness and burning desire was definately female.Moist black arms carressed me,and eyelashes fluttered across my lips. "You are mine forever,Philippe Charbonneau," she purred. "Till the end of the world,and after; throughout the many cycles,you are mine".

4. The Unfulfill'd Dream

My new novel, <u>The Blessings of Pandora</u>, had been the number one bestseller for six weeks now.

Outside,trees were being planted as part of a neighborhood renovation program.The air was not quite as bad,and the tenements being torn down.

Thing sat pertly at the foot of the bed; a nubian princess in shorts and a halter top.I smiled.She had been dressed like this the night we met.

I sat down beside her,and put my arm around her."We did it love! The sleeping dreamers have risen,the planet is reborn."

"And Creativity and Stagnation are balanced," she said, and I saw that she had a tear in her eye. "What of you,Phillipe? Has some imagination appeared to offset the inertia in you soul?"

The possibility had not occured to me until now. I thought for a minute;hypothesised,theorised,conjectured,analyzed,and supposed. Were there mantichores in the closet? Did the attic have basilisks? Of course! But what were they doing there? Ah,now that was a story...

I grabbed Thing and held her close. "Dreams!" I shouted. "Woman,I have dreams of my own! I need leech from you no longer. What splendid tales of epic adventure I shall weave. What quaint Dunsian fables I shall relate!"

"Do that, Phillipe Charbonneau, and Creativity will dominate.No,equillibrium must be maintained. You are not the only one who serves the Balance. I am sorry."

I pulled away. Thing no longer had a face; just an enormous maw growing ever larger. An elastic tongue wrapped around my waist, and pulled me into the cavernous aperature. Gigantic tusks tore my flesh apart. Before I began my long journey of transmigrations, my lifemonad lingered in the room for a few more seconds. I saw a cheap black whore put on her paint,go out into the world, and wait for another client.

BARBARIANS DEMONS FREAKS & FANCY

AND OTHER COSMIC THINGIES

HI, FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO DON'T KNOW ME, AND THAT'S MOST OF YOU, I'M DARWIN HOWE. I'M THE GUY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE NEXT FEW PAGES YOU'RE ABOUT TO SEE. MY FRIENDS HERE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT SO JUST IGNORE THEM AS BEST YOU CAN. RUSS THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA IF I TOLD YOU A LITTLE ABOUT MYSELF BEFORE WE START SO, HERE GOES... I'M 25 AND LIVE AT 217 34TH AVE. NORTH IN ST. CLOUD, MINNESOTA (ZIP: 56301) WITH MY WIFE, A DOG, A CAT, A SKUNK, A PARAKEET, A HAMSTER, AND TWO GOLDFISH. I WORK AS A COUNTERMAN IN AN AUTO PARTS STORE AND AM RELATIVELY SELF-TAUGHT WHERE ART IS CONCERNED. I AM A RECENT MEMBER OF THE WSA PROGRAM (#1254) TO WHICH I HAVE JUST SNUCK IN A FREE PLUG. MY INTERESTS INCLUDE COMICS, ART, PINBALL, BEER, COMMUNITY THEATER, MOVIES, PIZZA, BUBBLEGUM CARDS, T.V., GIRLS (WHEN MY WIFE'S NOT LOOKING), CARTOONS, MY MOTORCYCLE, TENNIS, AND PRINTED TEE-SHIRTS. IF ANYONE WANTS TO DROP ME A LINE WITH COMMENTS, CRITICISMS,... OR JUST TO RAP, FEEL FREE. A S.A.S.E. WILL GUARANTY A REPLY, THE REST WILL JUST HAVE TO TAKE THEIR CHANCES. WELL, THE TIME HAS COME FOR YOU TO TURN THE PAGE AND ENJOY.....OR RETCH, WHATEVER THE CASE MAY BE. THANKS FOR LISTENIN'!

Oct. 76

"...And as the monstrous mouth gaped like that of a great snake, Conan drove his spear into the red angle of the jawbone hinge."

"Red Nails"
by Robert E. Howard

IN THE DISTANT FUTURE, EARTH HAS REVERTED TO A BIZARRE STATE OF BARBARSIN; A BARBARISM CONSISTING OF CONTRASTING TIME PERIODS OF HISTORY. THIS STRANGE CONDITION WAS BROUGHT ABOUT BY A HUGE SPHERE FROM OUTER SPACE WHICH CHANGED THE EARTH FOR ITS OWN REASONS, UNKNOWN TO ALL AS TO WHY READ NOW THE TALE OF THREE MEN TRYING TO RIGHT A COSMIC WRONG, NO MATTER THE PRICE.

THE AGE OF THE SPHERE

PART ONE:

... THE WIZARD, THE WARRIOR, AND THE WANDERER ...

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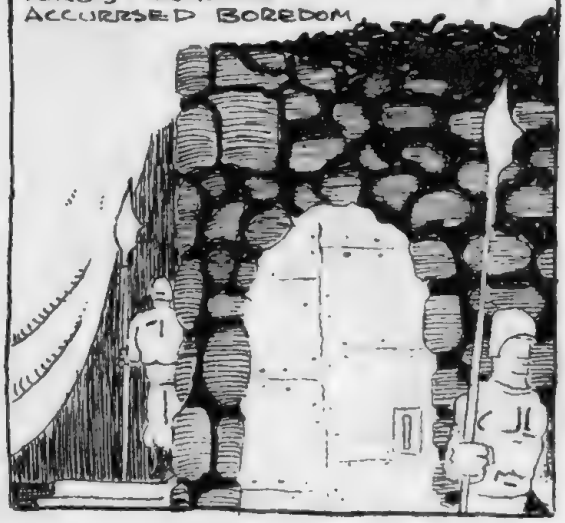
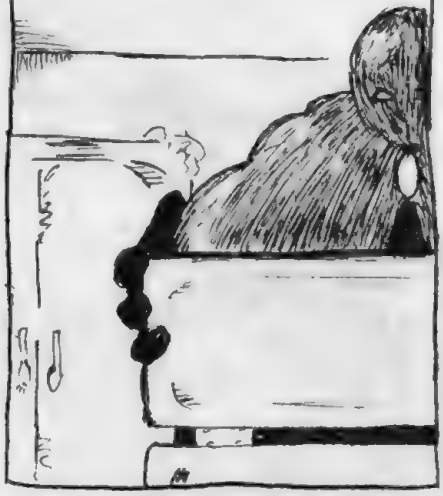
ABOUT THE ONLY THING NOTABLE TO THE GUARDING OF A CERTAIN KING'S TREASURE ROOM IS THE ACCURSED BOREDOM.



AFTER ALL, WHO COULD POSSIBLY STEAL FROM A ROOM LOCATED IN A LOFTY, WINDOWLESS, TOWER?

WHO BUT ONE VERSED IN THE MYSTIC ARTS?

SWIFTLY CROSSING THE ROOM, THE DARK FIGURE OPENS A PARTICULAR ORKEN CHEST.



HIS GLOVED FINGERS RUN THROUGH THE CONTENTS, SMALL FORTUNES RUNNING 'TWIXT HIS FINGERS AS HE LOOKS FOR A CERTAIN ITEM.

AT LAST! I HAVE FOUND IT!

WITH IT, I CAN NOW CURE THIS PLANET OF THE HELLISH CURSE CAST UPON IT!

FOR ONLY THIS RING, AND ITS TWO MATES ARE CAPABLE OF CAUSING THE DOWN-FALL OF THE SPHERS

MY NEXT TASK: FIND THE BEARERS OF THE OTHER TWO RINGS, AND CONVINCE THEM TO AID ME WITH THIS RING TO GUIDE ME, FINDING THEM WILL PRESENT NO PROBLEM.

SEVERAL THOUSAND MILES AWAY ACCROSS A GLITTERING EXPANSE OF OCEAN, WALKS A YOUNG MAN THROUGH HILLY GROUND

HIS QUIET, SERENE WALK IS ABBRUPTLY INTERUPTED BY THE APPEARENCE OF A HUGE, HULKING CREATURE.
WENDAGOR!

MY ONLY CHANCE OF LIVING IS TO STRIKE BEFORE IT DOES, GOTTA' USE MY STAFF OF POWER!!

FROM ONE END OF THE LONG METAL STAFF BURSTS A BEAM OF SEETING RAW ENERGY WHICH CATCHES THE BEAST IN THE CHEST

WELL DONE, WANDERER.
WHO---?!

WORRY NOT, I MEAN NO HARM. I'VE COME TO TALK.

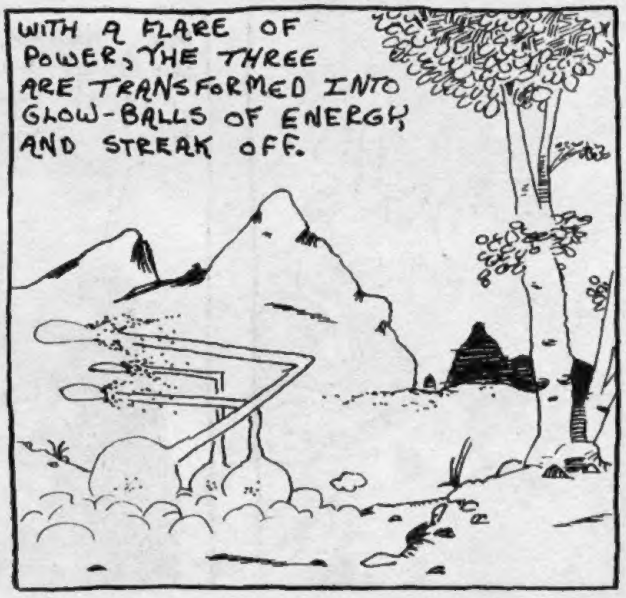
TALK? ABOUT WHAT? JUST WHO ARE YOU?
MERELY A WIZARD SEEKING AID.
WHOA. NO CLOSER FOR NOW. IF YOU WANT TO TALK, DO IT FROM THERE.
VERY WELL. IT IS WISE TO BE CAUTIOUS IN THESE TIMES
BUT TO BUSSINESS. I NEED YOUR AID TO HELP DESTROY SOMETHING WHICH HAS TORN THE TIME PHASES OF THIS PLANET ASUNDER
I NEED YOU, USING YOUR RING AND YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF SCIENCE TO HELP ME DESTROY THE SPHERE OF MIST ISLE.
WHAT?!
LISTEN. NO BODY CAN DO IT. I WISH I COULD. THAT WAY THIS EARTH WOULD ONCE MORE BE A PLANET OF SCIENCE AND ORDER.
I SAY IT CAN BE DONE.
WOULD IT NOT BE WORTH THE EFFORT? TO SEE DEVICES LONG DUST ONCE MORE POUND FORTH, TO HAVE MIRACLE CURES WIPE OUT COMMON POXS? WOULDN'T IT!!
YES...
VERY WELL. I'LL HELP. THERE'S NO WAY TO SUCCEED BUT I'LL DO WHAT I CAN.
EXCELLENT! DEACTIVATE YOUR STAFF PLEASE. IT'S INNER WORKINGS WOULD UP SET MY SPELL OF TRANSPORTION AND SCATTER OUR ATOM'S ACROSS THE GALAXY
O.K.
SEVERAL MINUTES AND HUNDREDS OF MILES, LATER....

BACK OFF, SCUM! I DON'T GO FOR GETTIN' STABBED IN THE BACK!
DIDN'T HEAR WHAT I JUST SAID, EH? TOO BAD!!
ARGGH!
EAT STEEL, LOW-LIFE! THIS'LL TEACH YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS TO ATTACK A LONE TRAVELER!
URK...
I'LL TAKE THE REST OF YOU THIEVES ON, TOO! C'MON!
JUST AS I THOUGHT...
A BUNCH OF COWARDLY, BOOT LICKING, --- EH?
I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU TWO CAME FROM, BUT PREPARE TO DIE!
WATCH OUT WIZ!!
NO NEED TO FEAR; I'LL JUST RELIEVE HIM OF HIS SWORD.
WHA...
BAH! RELIEVE ME OF MY FISTS, TOO, THEN. YOUR JAW IS AS EASY TO HIT AS ANYONES', WIZARD!
FEELS FUNNY TO HIT SOMEONE WHO'S GOING TO HELP ME SAVE THE WORLD!!

POW!
MY THANKS, FRIEND. A SIMPLE SPELL OF BONDAGE WILL TAKE CARE OF OUR DIFFICULT ASSOCIATE NOW.
HEY!
PERHAPS YOU'LL BE MORE REASONABLE. WE WISH MERELY TO TALK.
YOUR FRIEND WITH THE METAL STICK TALKS PRETTY FORCEFULLY.
NO NEED FOR SARCASM. I WISH TO ASK YOU IF YOU'LL HELP US WITH A PROJECT.
HELP? YOU?! WHY SHOULD I? YOU'VE HIT ME OVER THE HEAD AND TIED ME UP!!
MAYBE I SHOULD HIT HIM AGAIN.
DO THAT AND YOU'LL PAY. SOMEWHERE, SOMEHOW...
ENOUGH! WE NEED YOUR HELD BECAUSE YOU WEAR THE RING.
MYSTIC LAWS STATE ONE MUST USE THE PRESENT POSSESSOR OF THE RING. I CANNOT FORCE THE RING OFF YOUR HAND. However...
WE CAN LEAVE YOU HERE, BOUND HELPLESSLY. WHEN THE THIEVES FIND YOU, WE WILL MERELY BARGAIN WITH THE ONE WHO REMOVES IT FROM YOUR CORPSE. WHAT SAY YOU NOW?
HMMM.
SURE WHY NOT? I'LL HELP. ONLY BECAUSE YOU STRIKE SUCH, ER, FAIR BARGAINS.
I'LL GET REVENGE FOR THIS HUMILIATION LATER, THOUGH!!

WIZ, HE CAN'T BE TRUSTED!! HE'LL SCREW US UP SOMEHOW!
QUIET PUNK, OR I MAY NOT CONTINUE FORGETTING HOW YOU HIT ME.

TIME TO HEAD FOR MY HOME. PREPARE YOURSELVES, PLEASE.
UH, YEAH, SURE.


WITH A FLARE OF POWER, THE THREE ARE TRANSFORMED INTO GLOW-BALLS OF ENERGY AND STREAK OFF.

ACROSS THE ROLLING OCEAN THEY FLY, LEAVING A GLITTERING TRAIL MILES BEHIND THEM.

MINUTES LATER, THEY APPROACH A DARK TOWER, SURROUNDED BY A FOREST.

WELCOME TO MY HOME, GENTLEMEN.

HERE WE SHALL PLAN THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SPHERE!
CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE.

DOCTOR FATE
BLYBERG
MUTSCHLER

Geiser
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